University of Toronto Opera

Mansfield Park

by Jonathan Dove

Libretto by Alasdair Middleton

March 12, 13, 14 @ 7:30pm | March 15 @ 2:30pm
MacMILLAN THEATRE, Edward Johnson Building
80 Queen's Park, Toronto, ON

Tim Albery's participation made possible by a generous gift from Nora R. Wilson.

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For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

CANADIAN PREMIERE

Mansfield Park

Composer: Jonathan Dove, Libretto: Alasdair Middleton
Based on the novel by Jane Austen

Conductor: Sandra Horst
Director: Tim Albery
Set Design: Michelle Tracey
Costume Design: Lisa Magill
Lighting and Video Design: Wesley McKenzie
Surtitles™: John Sharpe
Stage Manager: Kristin McCollum*
Assistant Conductor: Kate Carver
Assistant Director: Mario Pacheco
Assistant Stage Manager: Ardavan Taraporewala
Répétiteurs: Brandon Tran, Benjamin Zsoldos

Additional support for new costumes generously provided by Sheila Waengler.

The opening night performance is generously supported by a gift from the estate of Morton Greenberg.

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FACULTY OF MUSIC

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On composing Mansfield Park

When I first read *Mansfield Park,* some 30 years ago, I heard music. That doesn't always happen when I read, and it certainly didn't happen with Jane Austen's other novels. But there's something about this particular book that provoked musical ideas.

Of course, music is often involved in Austen's stories: there are dances and private concerts, many of her heroines play the piano (as did Jane Austen herself) and some of them sing. In *Mansfield Park,* Fanny Price's opponent Mary Crawford plays that dangerously romantic instrument, the harp.

But while I was reading the novel, what elicited music was not the literal presence of instruments in the story, but something beneath the surface. I think it was the way the heroine, Fanny Price, so often suffers in silence. There are clues to her feelings, but unlike the lively Emma Woodhouse, or the high-spirited Elizabeth Bennet, she does not express them. Her reticence invited music, as a way of revealing those hidden emotions.

Two scenes particularly stood out as especially poignant, and musical. Fanny's beloved Edmund is distracted and entranced by Mary Crawford, but one evening he joins Fanny to gaze out of the window at the stars. Fanny is overjoyed to be reunited with him – but then Mary Crawford starts to sing, and Edmund is drawn back to her, away from the window where Fanny now stands alone, looking out at the stars. This follows a scene where Fanny helplessly watches Edmund going off into a wilderness with Mary Crawford, leaving Fanny alone in silent suffering.

These scenes have haunted me for years: Fanny's pained silences gave me the impulse to write music for her and I began to think about a *Mansfield Park* opera. I wrote it first with a two piano accompaniment, and later for a little chamber orchestra, with a piano still playing a prominent role, but using all the instrumental colours of the period.

Program note written by composer Jonathan Dove.

CAST	Mar 12/14	Mar 13/15
Fanny Price	Renee Fajardo	Renee Fajardo
Lady Bertram	Alexandra Fee	Alexandra Fee
Sir Thomas Bertram	Adam Kuiack	Alex Halliday
Maria Bertram	Saige Carlson	Mélissa Danis
Julia Bertram	Lindsay Connolly	Lindsay Connolly
Edmund Bertram	Korin Thomas-Smith	Parker Clements
Aunt Norris	Julianna Krajčovič	Sacha Smith
Mary Crawford	Midori Marsh	Maeve Palmer
Henry Crawford	River Guard	River Guard
Mr. Rushworth	Elias Theocharidis	Elias Theocharidis

There will be one intermission of 20 minutes after Act 1.

UNDERSTUDIES

Fanny Price	Alessia Vitali
Lady Bertram	Maria Milenic
Julia Bertram	Danielle Nicholson
Edmund Bertram	Nicholas Higgs
Henry Crawford	Angelo Moretti
Mr. Rushworth	David Walsh

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Double Bass
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Karen Chiang

Oboe/English Horn
Ciara Wheeler

Clarinet
Marco De Conno

Bassoon
Michael Quigley

Horn I
Paolo Rosselli

Horn II
Noah Hawryluck

Percussion
Alland Gordon Fry IV

Coming up

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Cover artwork: Elias Theocharidis

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